LEADERSHIP THEORIES AND EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT: AN INSIGHT

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Abstract

It is generally perceived that the growth of nation converge on the quality of its educational leaders. The basic concern of this theoretical debate is to examine the wider context of leadership and its effectiveness towards improving school management. This paper analyses recent theoretical developments in the study of educational leadership in school management. Beginning with an overview of the concept of leadership in terms of research, theory, and practice, this paper examines theories of leadership and styles of leadership. An attempt is made on identification of contemporary issues and possible means of amelioration. This article concludes that success is certain if the application of the leadership styles, principles and methods is properly and fully applied in school management because quality educational leadership tradition offers great opportunity to further refine educational leadership and management policies and practices by accepting and utilizing the basic principles and styles of educational leadership.
Keywords: *Leadership, Styles, Principles, Management, Policies and Practices*

Introduction

Many of us believe that leaders are not born, but made. Interestingly, it is also recognized that in order to be a good leader, one must have the experience, knowledge, commitment, patience, and most importantly the skill to negotiate and work with others to accomplish organizational goals. Good leaders are thus made, not born. Good leadership is developed through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and the accumulation of relevant experience (Bass & Bass, 2008). In his book, "*The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society*", Boulding (1956) outlined the general trans-disciplinary theory of knowledge and human, social, and organizational behaviour. He mentioned that the basis of a good leadership is strong character and selfless devotion to an organization (*cf.*Jenkins, 2013). From the perspective of employees, leadership is comprised of everything a leader does that affects the achievement of objectives and the well-being of employees and the organization (Abbasialiya, 2010). Trustworthiness is often key to positions of leadership as trust is fundamental to all manner of organized human groups, whether in education, business, the military, religion, government, or international organizations (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2007).

Rowe (2007) described leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. This article contends that effective leadership is crucial to the proper operation and very survival of a non-profit organization. Leadership is arguably one of the most observed, yet least understood phenomena on earth (Burns, in Abbasialiya, 2010). There is no particular style of leadership that can be considered universal. Despite the many diverse styles of leadership, a good or effective leader inspires, motivates, and directs activities to help achieve group or organizational goals. Conversely, an ineffective leader does not contribute to organizational progress and can, in fact, detract from organizational goal accomplishment. Naylor (1999) pointed out that effective leadership is a product of the heart and an effective leader must be visionary, passionate, creative, flexible, inspiring, innovative, courageous, imaginative, experimental, and initiates change.
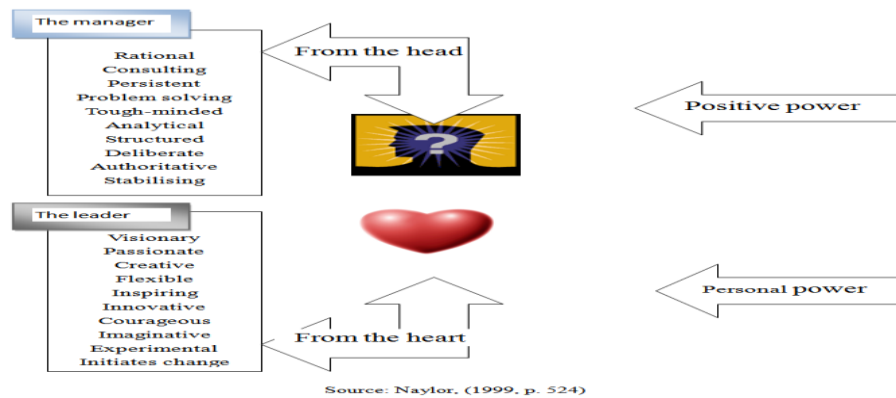
The manager
- Rational
- Consulting
- Persistent
- Problem solving
- Tough-minded
- Analytical
- Structured
- Deliberate
- Authoritative
- Stabilising

From the head

Positive power

The leader
- Visionary
- Passionate
- Creative
- Flexible
- Inspiring
- Innovative
- Courageous
- Imaginative
- Experimental
- Initiates change

From the heart

Personal power

Source: Naylor, (1999, p. 524)

Figure 1. Qualities of the leader and the manager

This study focuses on two questions: first, what is educational leadership? and second, what is the impact of leadership style on school management, teachers and students ? And, third, what role it plays in meeting the challenges facing educational institutions in India? The main focus of this theoretical debate is to critically analyse the wider context in which leadership is made on effectiveness and improved school management. For understanding phenomenon of this nature, theories of leadership provide vital insight on various dimensions of leadership.

Theories of Leadership

In contemporary socio-economic and political world traditional theories of leadership i.e trait and personality based characteristics have shifted to situation perspective in which situation is determined by skills of the leader (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). All contemporary theories can be accommodated under three broad perspectives; process perspective, trait perspective, and skill perspective. Implicitly, there seems to be some degree of affirmation that leadership is a process that involves influence with a group of people toward the realization of goals (Wolinski, 2010). It was pointed out by Charry (2012) that scholarly interest in leadership received increased attention of scholars during the early part of the twentieth century. According to this scholar there are eight major theories of leadership. Earlier theories focused on the qualities that distinguish leaders from followers, whereas later ones viewed other factors associated with leadership. Thse theories are: Trait Theory, "Great Man" Theory, Contingency Theories, Situational Theory, Behavioural Theory, Participative Theory, Transactional / Management, Theory Relationship / Transformational Theory, and Skills Theory.

Trait Theory assumes that people inherit certain traits or qualities which make them better suited to leadership. Trait theories often identify particular personality or behavioural characteristics that are shared by leaders. But many have begun to criticize this theory and questions, if particular traits are key features of leaders and leadership, how do we explain people who possess those qualities but are not leaders? Inconsistencies in the relationship between leadership traits and leadership effectiveness eventually led scholars to shift paradigms in search of new explanations for effective leadership. Great Man Theory emphasizes that great leaders are born, not made. These theories often portray leaders as heroic, mythic and destined who rise to leadership whenever needed (Ololube, 2013). Contingency Theories stress on specific variables in the environment that might determine which style of leadership is best suited for a particular work situation. According to this theory, leadership styles vary across all situations. Success depends upon a number of variables, including leadership style, qualities of followers and situational features (Charry, 2012). Contingency theory categorically states that effective leadership depends on the degree of fit between a leader's qualities and leadership style and that demanded by a specific situation (Lamb, 2013). A contingency factor is thus any condition in any relevant environment to be considered when designing an organization or one of its elements (Naylor, 1999).

Situational Theory proposes that leaders choose the best course of action based upon situational circumstances. Different styles of leadership may be more appropriate for different types of decision-making. For instance, where group members are skilled experts and expect to be treated as such, a democratic style

may be more effective. In other instances, in a situation where the leader is expected to be the most knowledgeable and experienced member of a group, an authoritarian style of leadership might be most appropriate. Behavioural theories of leadership are based on the premise that great leaders are made, not born. This theory focuses on the actions of leaders and not on their intellectual qualities. People can learn to become leaders through training and observation. Naylor (1999) noted that interest in the behaviour of leaders emerged from systematic comparison of autocratic and democratic leadership styles. Autocratic leaders are met with unhappiness and hostility of group members. A democratic leader is often a welcome by group members. Participative leadership theories point out that the ideal leadership style is one that takes the input of others into account. Participative leaders encourage participation and contributions from group members and help group members to feel relevant and committed to the decision-making process. According to Lamb (2013), a manager who believes in participative leadership, seeks to involve other people, rather than making all the decisions at his own. In this way, improves commitment and collaboration, which results into rational decisions.

Transactional Theory focuses on the role of supervision, organization and group performance and the exchanges that take place between leaders and followers. This approach confines leadership on a system of rewards and punishments (Charry, 2012). In other words, on the notion that a leader's job is to create structures that make it abundantly clear what is expected of followers and the consequences (rewards and punishments) associated with meeting or not meeting organizational expectations (Lamb, 2013). When employees are successful, they are rewarded and when they fail, they are reprimanded or punished (Charry, 2012). This theory is often likened to the concept and practice of management and continues to be an extremely common component of many leadership models and organizational structures (Lamb, 2013).Transformational theoretical perspective focuses on the connections formed between leaders and followers. In this a leader engages with others and is able to "create a connection" that results in increased motivation and morality in both followers and leaders. Transformational leaders motivate and inspire people by helping group members see the importance and higher purpose of the task. These leaders are focused on the performance of group members, but also on each person to fulfilling his or her potential. Leaders of this style often exhibit high degree of ethical and moral standards (Charry, 2012). Skills Theory conveys that learned knowledge and acquired skills/abilities are significant factors in the practice of effective leadership. Interestingly, this theory acknowledges the connection between inherited traits and the capacity to lead effectively, but argues that learned skills, a developed style, and acquired knowledge, are the real keys to leadership performance. It demands considerable effort and resources for leadership training and development (Wolinski, 2010).

Principles of Leadership

- In addition to leadership theories, the principles of leadership are a commonly studied phenomenon. The United States Army (1983) identified eleven basic principles of leadership and the means for implementing them:
- Be technically proficient: As a leader, you must know your job and have a solid familiarity with the tasks of your different employees;
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your workers: Help to develop good character traits that will help them carry out their professional responsibilities;
- Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished: Communication is key. A leader must be able to communicate effectively. Leaders should spend most of their day engaged in communication. Older studies, in fact, noted that organizational leaders (managers) spent 70 to 90 per cent of their time each day on communication and related activities (Barrett, [n.d]);
- Keep your workers informed: Know how to communicate with not only junior staff, but senior staff and other key people as well;
- Know your people and look out for their well-being: Be well versed in basic human nature and recognize the importance of sincerely caring for your workers;
- Know yourself and seek self-improvement : In order to know yourself, you have to understand what you are,what you know, and what you can do (attributes). Seeking self-improvement means continually strengthening your attributes.This can be accomplished through self-study, formal education, workshops, reflection, and interacting with others;

- Make sound and timely decisions: Use good problem solving, decision making, and planning tools;
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions: Search for ways to guide your organization to new heights. When things go wrong, do not blame others. Analyze the situation, take corrective action, and move on to the next challenge;
- Set the example: Be a good role model for your employees. Employees mustnot only be told what is expected of them, but see leaders embodying organizational qualities and ethics. Leaders must embody what they wish to see in their employees;
- Train as a team: Do not focus on just your department, section, or employees, but envision the whole organization as an entity that must learn and succeed together; and
- Use the full capabilities of your organization: By developing a team spirit, you will be able to employ the abilities of your entire organization towards organizational goals.

Effective educational leadership is very essential to educational effectiveness and improvement (Ololube et. al. 2012). To sustain it, leaders must develop sustainability on how they approach, commit to and protect teaching and learning in educational institutions; how they sustain themselves and followers around them to promote and support teaching and learning; how they are able and encouraged to sustain their vision and avoid burning out; and how they consider the impact of their leadership in educational management. Most leaders want to do things that matter, to inspire others to do it with them and to leave a legacy once they have gone (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). To a large extent, it is not leaders who mismanage their organisations; however, it is the system in which they lead (Mulford, 2003). Questionably, sustainable leadership certainly needs to become a commitment of all educational leaders. To sustain effective educational leadership, Hargreaves and Fink (2004) presented seven principles:

- It creates and preserves sustaining learning.
- It secures success over time.
- It sustains the leadership of others.
- It addresses issues of social justice.
- It develops rather than depletes human and material resources.
- It develops environmental diversity and capacity.
- It undertakes activist engagement with the environment

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles are the approaches employed to motivate followers. Leadership is not a "one size fits all" phenomenon. Leadership styles should be selected and adapted to fit organizations, situations, groups, and individuals. It is thus useful to possess a thorough understanding of the different styles as such knowledge increases the tools available to lead effectively. Below are a number of leadership styles articulated in the Toolkit (n.d):

Autocratic leadership is a form of transactional leadership, where leaders veil complete power over staff. Staff and team members have little opportunity to make suggestions, even if these are in the best interest of the team or organization. The benefit of autocratic leadership is that it is incredibly efficient. Decisions are made quickly, and the work to implement those decisions can begin immediately. In terms of disadvantages, most staff resent being dealt with in this way. Autocratic leadership is often best used in crisis situation, when decisions must be made quickly and without any dissent. Bureaucratic leaders follow rules rigorously, and expect and ensure that their staff also follow suit, precisely. This is an appropriate leadership style for work involving serious safety risks (such as working with machinery, with toxic substances, or at dangerous heights) or where large sums of money are involved. Bureaucratic leadership is also useful in organizations where employees do routine tasks (Shaefer, 2005). The drawback of this type of leadership is that it is ineffective in teams and organizations that rely on flexibility, creativity, or innovation (Santrock, 2007). Charismatic Leadership Style describes what to expect from both leaders and followers. It is a style which is identifiable but may be perceived with less tangibility than other leadership styles (Bell, 2013). Often called a transformational leadership style, charismatic leaders inspire eagerness in their teams and are energetic in motivating employees to move forward. The ensuing excitement and commitment from teams is an enormous asset to productivity and goal achievement. The negative side of charismatic leadership is the amount of confidence placed in the leader rather than in employees. This can create the risk of a project or even in an

entire organization collapsing in a situation when the leader disappears. Additionally, a charismatic leader may come to believe that he/she can do no wrong, even when others are warning him or her about the path he/he is on; feelings of invincibility can ruin a team or an organization. Democratic Leadership Style indicates that leaders make final decisions, but include team members in the decision-making process. They encourage creativity among team members. This also helps develop employees' skills. Team members feel a part of something larger and meaningful and so are motivated to by more than just a financial reward. The danger of democratic leadership is that it can falter in situations where speed or efficiency is essential. During a crisis, for instance, a team can waste valuable time gathering input. Another potential danger is that team members without the knowledge or expertise may fail to provide high quality input. Laissez-Faire Leadership Style may be the best or the worst of leadership styles (Goodnight, 2011). This allows people to work on their own. Laissez-faire leaders abdicate responsibilities and avoid making decisions, they may give teams complete freedom to do their work and set their own deadlines. They usually allow their subordinate the power to make decisions about their work (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012). They provide teams with resources and advice, if needed. They, otherwise, do not get involved. This style can be effective provided the leader monitors performance and gives feedback to team members regularly. Team members enjoy greater degree of autonomy which can lead to high job satisfaction and increased productivity. However, it can be damaging if team members do not manage their time well or do not have the knowledge, skills, or motivation to do their work effectively. This type of leadership can also occur when managers do not have sufficient control over their staff (Ololube, 2013). Transactional Leadership Style begins with the idea that team members agree to obey their leader when they accept a job. The transaction usually involves the organization paying team members in return for their effort and compliance. The leader has right to punish team members if their work doesn't meet an appropriate standard. The minimalistic working relationships that result (between staff and managers or leaders) are based on this transaction (effort for pay).

Determinants of Leadership Style

Ibara (2010) outlined number of factors which can help singly or in combination to determine which type of leadership style is most effective in a particular situation. For instance, these are: (1) Size of an organization; (2) Degree of interaction; (3) Personality of Members; (4) Goal Congruency; and (5) Level of Decision Making.

All organizations have inherent tendency to grow. As they grow in size, problems arise which may become more difficult to address at a macro or senior management level. At the same time institutions and organizations grow larger and become more multifaceted. There is a propensity for decision making to be centralized (Naylor, 1999). This situation leads to limited employee participation or no participation at all. Leaders may, if inclined, present ideas and invite input from employees (Ibara, 2010). Organizational interaction or communication between two or more individuals on the basis of social and organizational structures is aimed at achieving goals (Ololube, 2012). In changing scenario, we witness today, uncertainty is rampant in many situations in organizations and leaders need to be involved with their staff to ensure organizational learning and address of critical issues. The intensity and quality of interaction in an organization tends to influence the style of organizational management in order to accomplish tasks. Naylor (1999) pointed out that for organizations to be effective, it is essential that managers and leaders constantly share information, ensure open channels of communication, regular attention on information, and regular debate on the nature of data. Openness increases the likelihood of better communication and in turn the functioning and survival of organizations (Ololube, 2012). Personality attributes of employees and managers are crucial in determining style of the leader. Some tend to react more to a particular leadership style than those who depend on others. Those with an understandable sense of direction wish to advance in their careers and enjoy participating in organizational decision-making processes tend to be more inclined towards open and collaborative leadership styles. Leaders should adapt to such situations by providing opportunities for participation to those who desire them and directing those who find it more difficult to participate in organizational decision-making (Ibara, 2010).The goal congruence is important for unity of direction as everybody (individuals, departments and divisions) is works towards the attainment of a common goal. Different leadership styles may be employed depending on the degree of existing goal congruence in an organization. Level of decision–making is also important in the context of leadership style. Weddle (2013) identified five levels of decision making in organizations. With each level the amount of time and the decision making involvement increases:

1. **Leader makes the decision alone & announces the decision**. This level requires   little time and no staff involvement. This is particularly useful in crisis situationsimmediate action is needed.

2. **Leader gathers input from individuals and makes the decision.** The leader seeks input, usually to cover blind spots and enhance the depth of understanding of   the issue at hand. Key individuals hold important information and not consulting is seen to be irresponsible.

3. **Leader gathers input from team and makes the decision.** The leader holds a team meeting and solicits input from the team, listens to the team's ideas and then using that information, makes a decision.

4. **Consensus building. At this level, the leader is part of the team** and s/he is just one vote/voice among many. The group processes all possible options and compromises until everyone is in agreement.

5 **Consensus and delegation with criteria/constraints**. The leader delegates decision making to the team and does not participate in decision making anddiscussions. This demands on the part of the leader to be very clear with the team and the criteria involved in decision making.

Educational Leadership and Management Processes

Leadership is perceived as the process of influencing employees/workers towards the achievement of organisational goals and organisational excellence (Naylor, 1999). Outstanding leaders nurture a vision for their organization which they share with all and which shapes the programmes of learning and teaching, policies, priorities, plans and procedures concerning the day-to-day life of the organization (Beare et al., 1997). In educational context, leaders inspire the whole system by effectively influencing the behaviours, thoughts, and feelings of those working within it, and ensure their vision by creating a strategic alignment across the whole system (Peretomode, 1991). No matter how effective leaders are, they are faced with numerous obstacles and challenges which they must manage to succeed and sustain organizational achievements.

Warren Bennis (2004) held that a leader makes good decisions which imply a goal, a direction, an objective, a vision, a dream, a path, and a reach. Further, a leader does the following:

- Shares with all in an organization, motivates people by helping them to identify with the task and the goal, rather than by rewarding or punishing them. Leaders inspire and empower people; they pull rather than push.
- Creates trust through one's competencies, integrity, and congruency between said and done.
- Maintains environment, defines mission, models the behavior, and expresses collective goals of the organisation.
- Perceives and handles 'failure' differently – they embrace error and vow to learn from it.
- Ensures a healthy and empowering environment for the workforce to generate commitment, and feeling and feeling of belongingness with the organization.
- Encourages a network or flattened hierarchy model- a more centralised model where the key words are acknowledge, create and empower.

On the whole, vision, constancy of purpose and consistency are central concerns of leaders in educational management and planning. They seek to establish the best educational policies and strategies, which involve the improvement of educational programmes and administrative services aimed at creating competent graduates capable of entering significant positions in society and, in turn, improving educational practices and procedures (Ololube, 2013). Effective leadership, Wallace and Hoyle (2005) argued that the management of the education systems require a shift of direction away from traditional and current orthodoxies of radical transformation promoted by reform policies towards a more temperate perspectives.

It can not be denied that educational management processes involve the orderly deployment of systems that ensure proper implementation of policies, strategies, and action plans through integrated and healthy practices to realise educational goals. Its optimization depends on a clear understanding of how different

units of work fit into the whole. Process performance looks at how management gathers information to form educational policy and strategy and involves the application of systems standards covering quality management systems (Lewis, Goodman & Fandt, 1995). It generates facts on the basis of which the processes in question can be effectively managed and continuously improved. This factual information supports decisions at all levels that in turn improve educational process performance further (Schoderbek, Cosier & Aplin, 1988). Educational leaders ensure that academic and non-academic staff are continually trained to operate in the innovative and ever-changing educational process and that they are building professional learning communities (Uriah & Agbor, 2013). According to Wallace and Hoyle (2005), effective leadership and management mean less leadership and management. Teachers are now increasingly caught up in specific managerial roles and distributed leadership. It is suggested that accepting effective leadership principles and styles in educational management are of vital significance. The key characteristics of the effective leadership have proven worth in the field of education.

Conclusion

Over the decades, literature on educational management and leadership, often discusses issues essential to educational leadership. The syntheses presented have roots in the reflective ability of the authors to link thematic issues across wider and complex themes. This article has highlighted effective educational leadership in educational management and a quality wake up call for a better model that has applicability in the context of the Indian education. By understanding leadership styles, principles, and practices which make up effective educational leadership , it may be concluded that success is certain, provided the leadership styles, principles and methods are applied in right spirits in educational management. However, there is always room for improvement keeping in mind tradition of quality educational leadership.

The authors tend to put forward that outstanding educational leadership principles and styles may be adopted intelligently and in right direction for enhancing educational management at all level in India. At present things are not moving and progressing in right direction due to half baked attention given to educational development and management. There is need for bridging the gap between theory and practice to provide exploration of dominant leadership strategies and to give educational leaders a solid basis in theory and practice. Educational leaders may explore combination of strategies to successful in their mission of effective educational leadership. Application of styles and practices is cost effective. This involves team-spirit, improvement in performance and enhancing teaching and learning.

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